

In Remembrance of
Martha Johnson Murphy



Wednesday, January 6th, 1999
1 O'Clock PM
Emeryville Holiday Inn

Her Journey

Arrival: Easter Sunday April 20th, 1924

Departure: Sunday December 27th, 1998

Martha Elizabeth Johnson, born to the proud parents, Joseph and Martha Johnson, in Oakland, California. She is one of seven children.

Educated in the Oakland school system, Martha was a talented student. After graduation from Oakland Technical High she received subsequent teacher training at bay area schools. She furthered her love of education in the Berkeley School System where she taught English for many years. She retired in 1986.

She was publicly speaking at the age of 13 months, yes one year and one month. Her parents were members of the Marcus Garvey movement and she stayed active in social causes throughout her lifetime. Martha was an accomplished singer, dancer, writer and decorator. But, her effect on people was even more profound. She would challenge long held ideas whenever she thought it necessary, but always with respect. Students would come to her years after having had her as a teacher and thank her for the help she gave and the genuine concern she had showed them. She loved to converse on many subjects, politics, music and sociology to name a few. Martha loved music and she loved travel. She traveled to Europe for several Jazz Festivals. Traveling abroad was her "talk about town", having seen 5 continents and many of the great cities. Her visits to Paris, Moscow, Rio De Janeiro and Johannesburg always gave her a good story to tell. She's even been east of Java to the island of Bali. And if you ever made mention of "Timbuktu" she would remind you that she's been there.

Martha was a fighter. She fought social injustice and ignorance all of her life and this year she fought cancer. She equated her April 1998 diagnosis of terminal pancreatic cancer with her trip to "The Mother Land" - a journey filled with anticipation not unlike a child opening a big pretty gift, something new - a challenge to conquer.

The strength and elegance she held onto, the pride and mustard-seed faith she proclaimed, her desire to make a statement and teach her kids "how" as she said "it's done". With dignity and consummate strength, the love and tenderness, the joy and warmth she fought a royal battle. Six months into her journey she wrote "I am still here" "I feel like the luckiest kid on the block"

She told us of her many blessings - one being able to hold on long enough to see what her kids "are made of". She told us "you are made of good stuff" and was at peace because she knew we would be all right.

To tell her story would take forever, therefore I will end... where she began ...

Peace, Love, Blessing to all who walked and talked and loved and cherished her journey.

-Her kids, Wayne, Angela and Malcolm

"She did it her way."

Martha leaves behind two brothers, Joseph Johnson, Robert M. Johnson, two sisters, Janie Johnson White, and Janice Johnson Moore. Three children Wayne E. Greene, Rhae Angela Tomeoni, Malcolm D. Greene. 7 Grandchildren Malia Greene, Cajun Tomeoni, R. Emio Tomeoni, David Caro-Greene, Lando S. Greene, Nolan Greene, Wyatt Greene, and a host of other nieces, nephews family and friends to hold and cherish her memory ... for ever and ever and ever.

Order of Service

Greeting-Benjamin K. Johnson

Opening Prayer-Aalim A. Moor II

Readings Selected by Martha Johnson Murphy- Vicki "Nyanza" Key

Musical Selection

-Wendel H. Brooks

Representing Berkeley High School History Department

Pastor Robert McKnight-

Rock of Truth Baptist Church

Acknowledgement of Cards, Flowers, Phone Calls and other Kindness

-Jan Mahr Moor

Acknowledgement of Alta -Bates Cancer Center

-Wayne E. Greene

Pastor Emily Simon -

Triumph the Church and Kingdom of God in Christ

Musical Selection- Buddy Connors

Her Journey

-Monica Bourgeois

Remembrances of Martha

by Family and Friends 2 min each

Musical Selection - Angela Tomeoni

Eulogy-Joseph Johnson

Closing Prayer- Aalim A. Moor II

Adjournment to Social Time and Refreshments

Honorary Pallbearers

Richard Bancroft
Joe Bridges
Donald Brown
Lester Franklin
Wayne E. Greene
Malcolm D. Greene
David Caro-Greene
Lando S. Greene
Robert Troy Hancock
Joseph Johnson
Robert Marcus Johnson
Jimmy Maker
Boyd Murphy
Muji Rizvi
Wilber "Night Train" Scott
Gregory Tomeoni
R. Emio Tomeoni
Cecil White
Hamisi White
Sweet Nolan
and Baby Wyatt

"Memories

Stored in unlikely Places
they float from the kitchen
when it's supper time
Sometimes they're hidden in the
unidentifiable flavor of a candy jelly bean-
taste of a long forgotten sweet
But they send your thoughts running back
to a someplace or time in childhood
(by Martha J. Murphy)

Lifes weapons seem
unduly cruel , unfair
and so strong - it chipped
away my exterior but
never touched my spirit-
This soldier fought valiantly
(by Martha J. Murphy)

Someday I'll write a poem about my mother...
but I'm not sure how it would begin...
you see, she's all the woman I could ever
hope to be...

... I admire her...
she's a small lady, when she looses an ounce
she gets to skinny
but she's the biggest mom I'll ever have...
I really want to write a poem about her
but what would I say?
you see, she's a totally lovely person, in ways
I'm sure I have yet to see
she's been my mom for 28 years now...
she hasn't changed much... her smile is still
as big as ever.. her touch still feels secure...
her laugh still makes me rejoice... she still
manages to spread herself among many, yet
when when I need her full attention -

I am not denied...
I LOVE this woman- I am selfish, I know
because what we have, my mom and I , It's
OURS, so special, warm and so kind...

I like it 'cause no one can enter our
world...
Someday, yeah, I think I'll write that poem...

(a poem by Angela for her mommy
written in 1979)

The family wishes to thank you, our friends,
for your many kind deeds, consoling words
and prayers during the passing of our loved
one. If during this difficult time we have
overlooked anyone, may we extend our
sincere gratitude. May God richly bless you.

-The Family

Donations may made in memory of "Martha
Johnson Murphy" to the "Comprehensive
Cancer Center" Checks should be made out
to "Comprehensive Cancer Center" and
mailed to: The Alta Bates Foundation 2850
Telegraph Ave. Berkeley, CA 94705. with a
note stating In memory of Martha Johnson
Murphy.